



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Aging and Adult Services

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Michael F. Easley, Governor  
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Dennis W. Streets, Director  
919-733-3983

July 26, 2006

**Dear County Director of Social Services:**

**Subject: Special Assistance In-Home Program Expansion**

The Division of Aging and Adult Services is pleased to tell you that during the 2006 Short Session of the General Assembly, HB 2576 was ratified and signed by the Governor. HB 2576 authorized expansion of the SA/In-Home Program to 1,500 slots, an increase of 500 slots. Prior to this expansion, 72 county departments of social services were participating in the Program. A listing of those counties is attached.

This is an excellent time for non-participating county departments of social services to enter into this valuable program. If you are interested in participating in this program, please complete the attached Request to Participate form and return it no later than the close of business on **September 1, 2006**.

If your county is already participating in the SA In-Home Program, you do not need to submit a Response for Proposal form to continue your participation with your current slot allocation. However, if you wish to request additional slots please complete the attached Request for Additional SA In-Home Program Slots and return it no later than the close of business on **September 1, 2006**.

If you would like more information on the SA In-Home Program, the "Special Assistance In-Home Program Report (January 2006)" to the General Assembly is available on the DHHS Long Term Care website at <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/aging/adultsvcs/SAInHomeFinalReport2006.pdf>. This report provides data on the characteristics of the individuals receiving assistance, such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, living arrangements, caregiver availability, and service needs. The report also describes how case management is provided and includes a cost analysis of providing SA payments to eligible individuals at home versus an adult care home.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE SA IN-HOME PROGRAM**

### Client Eligibility

1. Medicaid eligible individuals with incomes at or below 100% of the federal poverty level, and who meet all other eligibility criteria for Special Assistance, are financially eligible for Special Assistance payments in in-home living arrangements. The current federal poverty level (FPL) is \$817 and increases each year in April.

This income level (need standard) is lower than the income level for individuals receiving Special Assistance in adult care homes. The current SA income level for individuals in adult care homes, effective October 1, 2005, is close to 150% of the FPL. The General Assembly set the income level for the SA In-Home Program at 100% FPL to keep it consistent with the Medicaid income level for private living arrangements. Individuals with total countable monthly income between \$817 and \$1,163.50 are not eligible for the SA In-Home payment but may be eligible for payment in an adult care home.

2. The minimum payment in the SA In-Home Program is \$5.00.
3. Applicants must have a current FL-2, signed by a physician, indicating adult care home level of care.
4. Current policies and procedures for age, disability, citizenship, residence, resources, income, changes in situation, notices and appeals and fraud apply to SA In-Home applicants and recipients unless the SA In-Home policies and procedures indicate otherwise. The primary difference between policies for the SA In-Home Program and for SA in an adult care home is the lower income limit and the determination of the payment amount.
5. When an individual applies for Special Assistance, the caseworker will discuss the in-home option with him and, if he is interested, refer him to the Adult Services case manager for assessment. The case manager will conduct a face-to-face assessment at the applicant's home, using the Resident Assessment Instrument-Home Care (RAI-HC) assessment tool. The assessment must indicate that the individual can live at home safely with appropriate care and services. Based on the outcome of the assessment, the case manager will authorize or deny the SA In-Home payment and communicate that decision to the SA caseworker.
6. Counties that participate in the SA In-Home Program will use their existing Special Assistance budgets to make payments to eligible individuals who are in need of placement in an adult care home, but who choose to remain at home when an assessment shows they can do so safely with appropriate services. The program will not add any cost to the Special Assistance program. There are costs savings because the SA payment for in-home services is less than the SA payment for care in an adult care home. According to the data gathered from the current SA In-Home Program, the

average monthly SA payment in June 2006 for in-home services was \$340 and the average monthly SA payment for adult care home was \$460.

### Case Management

County departments that participate in the SA In-Home Program must provide case management for eligible individuals who receive SA at home. Medicaid At-Risk Case Management and/or SSBG can be used to provide the required case management.

The RAI-HC will be used by the DSS Adult Services staff to assess SA applicants who need placement in an adult care home but who prefer to continue living at home. The RAI-HC software will be provided to the counties participating in the SA In-Home Program and training will be provided on use of the tool. The case manager authorizes or denies approvals for SA In-Home payments, based on the assessment.

A laptop that meets the specifications for running the RAI-HC assessment software is necessary for the SA In-Home Program. The RAI-HC software requires Access to run; versions of the RAI-HC software are available that will operate with Access 97, Access 2002 or Access 2003. Because the RAI-HC software was designed to be used on a laptop computer that can be taken to the client's home to conduct the assessment, the original specifications for the software do not allow the software to be run from a network.

The case manager will use the following guidelines for working with recipients and their families.

1. The SA payment to individuals living at home is a supplement to their income in the form of a cash payment (just as it is a supplement to individuals entering adult care homes). The payment is intended to help the individual continue living at home and can be used for items or expenses related to achieving this goal. It can be used to cover items or expenses such as food, shelter, home repairs, minor home modifications (such as ramps, rails, grab bars), clothing, utilities, medical expenses and transportation not covered by Medicaid, and other daily necessities. The case manager authorizes specific items or expenses for which the SA In-Home payment can be used and monitors use of the payments.
2. The SA payment to individuals living in in-home living arrangements can be made to individuals living in the following types of residences: privately owned or rented home; apartment; congregate housing; multi-unit housing with services; public or subsidized housing; shared group residence; home-sharing arrangement.
3. Elderly & disabled adults with income at or below 100% FPL who meet other criteria are eligible for Medicaid. They are eligible for and can receive Medicaid funded services, such as Personal Care Services and At-Risk Case Management Services, which allow them to stay at home when they choose this and can do so safely. (Likewise, when Medicaid recipients live in adult care homes, Medicaid pays the facility for Personal Care Services, including Enhanced Personal Care Services, for medical transportation, and for other Medicaid-funded services.) Funding sources other than

Medicaid can be used to provide the in-home services that are needed by SA recipients living at home, such as In-Home Aide Services, Adult Day Services, Transportation Services, Housing and Home Improvement, etc. These funding sources include SSBG, State In-Home Services Fund, State Adult Day Care Fund, and Home and Community Care Block Grant funds.

4. Individuals qualifying for SA at home will have a choice of continuing to live at home or moving to an adult care home. Current SA recipients residing in adult care homes are also eligible for the in-home payment if they choose to return to a private living arrangement and can do so safely.
5. Reports, as needed, will be sent by county DSSs participating in the SA In-Home Program to the Division of Aging and Adult Services.

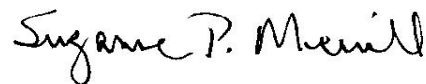
### Training

The Division will provide required training for all counties added to the SA In-Home Program. Those counties currently participating in the program where staff turnover has occurred or refresher information is needed may elect to attend the training. There will be day long training sessions in Raleigh or at regional locations for all staff working with the SA In-Home Program, including SA eligibility case workers, social work case managers, and supervisors. It is essential that staff attend a training session.

This is an important program with the potential to provide a choice of living arrangements for elderly and disabled adults. We look forward to hearing from county DSSs interested in participating in the SA In-Home Program. An SA In-Home policy and case management manual provides counties that participate in the program with ongoing guidance and policy. You may access it now at our on-line manuals web site (<http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/doa/>).

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Geoff Santoliquido, Special Assistance Program Administrator, at 919-733-3818 or your Adult Programs Representative.

Sincerely,



Suzanne P. Merrill, Chief  
Adult Services Section

SPM/gs

AFS-14-2006

Attachments

### SA In-Home Program Participating Counties (72)

Alamance <sup>2</sup>	Currituck <sup>1</sup>	Johnston <sup>1</sup>	Robeson <sup>1</sup>
Ashe <sup>2</sup>	Dare <sup>1</sup>	Lee <sup>2</sup>	Rockingham <sup>2</sup>
Beaufort <sup>3</sup>	Davidson <sup>2</sup>	Lenoir <sup>2</sup>	Rowan <sup>1</sup>
Bertie <sup>2</sup>	Davie <sup>4</sup>	Lincoln <sup>1</sup>	Rutherford <sup>2</sup>
Bladen <sup>2</sup>	Durham <sup>2</sup>	Martin <sup>2</sup>	Sampson <sup>2</sup>
Buncombe <sup>2</sup>	Edgecombe <sup>4</sup>	McDowell <sup>4</sup>	Scotland <sup>2</sup>
Burke <sup>4</sup>	Forsyth <sup>2</sup>	Mecklenburg <sup>1</sup>	Stanly <sup>4</sup>
Cabarrus <sup>1</sup>	Franklin <sup>2</sup>	Moore <sup>2</sup>	Stokes <sup>3</sup>
Caldwell <sup>2</sup>	Gaston <sup>2</sup>	Nash <sup>4</sup>	Surry <sup>2</sup>
Caswell <sup>2</sup>	Graham <sup>1</sup>	New Hanover <sup>2</sup>	Swain <sup>2</sup>
Catawba <sup>2</sup>	Guilford <sup>1</sup>	Northampton <sup>1</sup>	Transylvania <sup>2</sup>
Chatham <sup>1</sup>	Halifax <sup>4</sup>	Onslow <sup>1</sup>	Union <sup>2</sup>
Cherokee <sup>4</sup>	Harnett <sup>1</sup>	Orange <sup>2</sup>	Vance <sup>4</sup>
Clay <sup>4</sup>	Haywood <sup>2</sup>	Pamlico <sup>1</sup>	Wake <sup>2</sup>
Cleveland <sup>1</sup>	Henderson <sup>2</sup>	Pasquotank <sup>1</sup>	Watauga <sup>2</sup>
Columbus <sup>1</sup>	Hertford <sup>2</sup>	Pender <sup>2</sup>	Wayne <sup>2</sup>
Craven <sup>1</sup>	Hoke <sup>4</sup>	Pitt <sup>1</sup>	Wilson <sup>2</sup>
Cumberland <sup>1</sup>	Iredell <sup>1</sup>	Randolph <sup>2</sup>	Yadkin <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Original 22 participating counties (September 2000)

<sup>2</sup> Counties added October 2003

<sup>3</sup> Counties added December 2004

<sup>4</sup> Counties added November 2005

**REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE  
IN  
THE SPECIAL ASSISTANCE (SA) IN-HOME PROGRAM**

*NOTE: Form may be reproduced on your computer. Word.doc version is available on request by emailing [Geoff.Santoliquido@ncmail.net](mailto:Geoff.Santoliquido@ncmail.net)*

\_\_\_\_\_ County Department of Social Services requests to participate in the SA In-Home Program and will follow the policies and procedures developed by the Division of Aging and Adult Services for the participating counties. As County DSS Director, I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize the agency to participate in the SA In-Home Program.

I designate the following individual as the agency contact for this project:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address, if available: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please respond to each of the following questions.***

1. What is the maximum caseload of SA/In-Home recipients your agency can manage?
2. Who will conduct the assessments using the RAI-HC tool and provide the case management to the individuals receiving SA at home? If you don't know a specific person, please state the unit or position to which this project will be assigned.
3. How will you assure that the appropriate Adult Services, SA, and Adult Medicaid staff will work together to implement this program while maintaining current operations for these programs?
4. Does the case management staff that you have designated for this program have basic computer experience and access to a laptop computer equipped with Access software?
5. How many of your staff will need training? Will your staff be able to attend a required training session in Raleigh or will a regional location better accommodate your agency?

Send your responses no later than the close of business on **September 1, 2006** to:

Geoff Santoliquido  
Special Assistance Program Administrator  
Adult Services Section  
NC Division of Aging and Adult Services  
2101 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-2101

**REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL SLOTS  
FOR COUNTY DSS PARTICIPATING IN THE  
SPECIAL ASSISTANCE (SA) IN-HOME PROGRAM**

*NOTE: Form may be reproduced on your computer. Word.doc version is available on request by emailing [Geoff.Santoliquido@ncmail.net](mailto:Geoff.Santoliquido@ncmail.net)*

\_\_\_\_\_ County Department of Social Services requests \_\_\_\_\_ slots in the SA In-Home Program in addition to the \_\_\_\_\_ slots already allocated to this county and will follow the policies and procedures developed by the Division of Aging and Adult Services for the participating counties. As County DSS Director, I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize the agency to increase the number of slots available and continue participation in the SA In-Home Program.

I designate the following individual as the agency contact for this project:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address, if available: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please respond to each of the following questions.***

1. Has your agency fully utilized its current slot allocation and, if so, for how many months? Does your agency have a waiting list for the Program and, if so, how many people are now waiting for the service?
2. What is the maximum caseload of SA/In-Home recipients your agency can manage?
3. Will the same staff continue conducting the assessments using the RAI-HC tool and provide the case management to the increased number of recipients, or will additional staff be assigned? (If you don't know a specific person, please state the unit or position to which this project will be assigned.)
4. How many of your staff will need training? Will your staff be able to attend a training session in Raleigh or will a regional location better accommodate your agency?

Send your responses no later than the close of business on **September 1, 2006** to:

:

Geoff Santoliquido  
Special Assistance Program Administrator  
Adult Services Section  
NC Division of Aging and Adult Services  
2101 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-2101